

REMARKS

The Amendments

Claim 1 is amended to correct an obvious clerical error. The definition of "n" was extraneous due to previous amendments. This amendment does not narrow the scope of the claims and was not made for reasons related to patentability.

The Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103

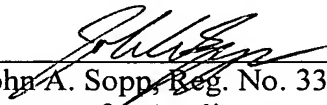
The rejection of claims 1-3, 5, 7-11, 13-14, 18-20 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §102, as anticipated by Yanai (U.S. Patent No. 6,395,353) and the rejections of claims 4, 6, 16-17 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103, as being obvious over Yanai in view of either Pausch (U.S. Patent No. 6,027,665), Sasada (U.S. Patent No. 6,548,126) or Leenhouts (U.S. Patent No. 5,883,686) are respectfully traversed.

All of these rejections are based primarily on Yanai. Yanai's earliest effective prior art date is its 35 U.S.C. §102(e) US filing date of March 15, 2001. Applicants have claimed priority to an earlier German application, No. 10063943.7 filed December 20, 2000. A certified priority document for this application has already been filed, as acknowledged in the Office Action. Submitted herewith is a verified English translation of that document. The translation verifies that applicants are entitled to the claim to priority for their instant claims. See, for example, pages 4-10, page 12 and pages 54-55 of the translation, supporting instant claim 1 and further disclosure of the translation supporting the dependent claims. Applicants have, thus, perfected their claim to priority for the date of December 20, 2000. This antedates the effective prior art date of Yanai, thus, removing all of the rejections based thereon (which are all of the outstanding rejections).

It is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance. However, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned to discuss any unresolved matters.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this response or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-3402.

Respectfully submitted,



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